

Keeping the First Team Safe

By Sgt Christina Rockhill
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD -- Force protection was the driving force behind the 1st Cavalry Division's efforts to provide armored layers to its fleet of vehicles. The effort began even before the division began migrating north from Kuwait into Baghdad in April. With recent questions raised in the media about the battle readiness of troops in Iraq, division leaders wanted to assure their Soldiers that they have the best the Army has to offer and continue to work the issue.

"Task Force Baghdad Soldiers are sent on combat patrol missions in an armored tracked vehicle, an M-1114 [armored humvee] or a humvee with Army-provided add-on-armor," said Brig. Gen. Jeffery Hammond, assistant division commander of support for the 1st Cav. Div. "We continue to maximize every opportunity the Army provides to apply more add-on armor. We also continue to work tirelessly to add such armor to our heavy truck fleet."

Lt. Col. Larry Phelps is the chief of logistics for the 1st Cavalry Division, or as he is known in the division as "Larry Up-Armor Phelps." He arrived in January before the division and has been the driving force in making sure the Soldiers of Task Force Baghdad have the needed equipment to accomplish their mission.

"We have not missed a single opportunity the Army has afforded to apply armor to our vehicles," Phelps said. "We've far outpaced most units in the Army in our ability to apply that armor."

More than half of all the division humvees in theater are up-armored, either through Army-provided add-on-armor kits or as M1114 up-armored humvees. Phelps said there are 24 new M1114 humvees on the way and as production in the Army has increased, so have the systems for Task Force Baghdad units.

"Humvees do not depart any of our camps for any reason unless they are up-armored," Hammond said. "However, not everything is up-armored to the degree we want, and we won't rest until all vehicles are up-armored."

Enhancing the force protection posture of Task Force Baghdad has been a work in progress.

"Every time the Army goes out to war



By Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

New M-1114 up-armored humvees arrive last April. The 1st Cavalry Division has armored more than 3,000 vehicles since taking over the security mission in Baghdad nearly ten months ago.

we never start out with the perfect equipment. It has to evolve over time, and I think this is part of the evolution," Phelps said.

"We've done everything humanly possible to make this thing work, short of building an up-armored wheeled vehicle factory here," Hammond said. "Does that mean because I occupy an M-1114, I'm not going to get hurt? Well, we know nothing in this environment is for certain. But, we have the best equipment available and that combined with good, smart tactics on the road gives you the greatest opportunity for troop force protection."

As new units are added to Task Force Baghdad it provides new challenges and opportunities to keep the Soldiers equipped and ready to fight, Hammond said.

"Since assumption of this mission, we've gained a national guard brigade, active Army brigade and two additional battalions from 82nd Airborne. In each case, we've ensured these units have the necessary track vehicle and humvee up-armored force protection capacity," Hammond said. As the two battalions from the 82nd Airborne arrived last week, they were equipped with 62 new M-1114s.

"We are looking for every option to

make sure all Soldiers are protected and safe," Hammond said.

The division has armored more than 3,000 systems since arriving in Baghdad and still has plans to armor as much as they can for the next group of Soldiers in Operation Iraqi Freedom III, Phelps said.

"We have over 100 slots in the month of December, so as that armor is provided by the Army, we will send those vehicles to the application point and appliqué armor will be applied to those vehicles," Phelps said. "We are setting conditions for those reserve units and active units to fall in our footprint and every possible piece of armor that can be hung between now and the time we redeploy is going toward the useful purpose of setting the conditions for Operation Iraqi Freedom III."

Hammond said the division will keep working to ensure the safety of its Soldiers.

"Facts speak louder than words, and the facts are in," he said. "You will not find an unarmored 1st Cavalry Division humvee operating outside a base camp on the road or on a combat mission. You can tell a 1st Cav. convoy or patrol on the road, because they are armored-up, the Soldiers are focused and serious."

82nd Airborne Soldiers Gear Up for Baghdad

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

CAMP AL TAHREER (LIBERTY), Baghdad -- Known for their ability to execute a strategic, forcible entry into any area of the world within 18 hours notification, the 82nd Airborne Division was an obvious choice to augment the 1st Cavalry Division's operations in Baghdad on short notice.

This time they were given four days notification.

Two battalions from the 82nd Airborne Division were temporarily assigned to the 1st Cav. Div. in early December as part of an effort to set the conditions for successful Iraqi elections Jan. 30. Soldiers from the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment began flying into Baghdad early December and were ready to begin combat operations within days; with one caveat.

"Light infantry divisions, and in our case, airborne, we don't have the vehicle resources," Staff Sgt. Max Rivera, with the 2-325 Airborne supply shop, said. "Once we hit the ground, our parent units, which in this case will be the 1st Cavalry Division... provides us with the vehicles to transport our heavy company and light infantry Soldiers in order for us to engage and do patrolling missions."

Currently, the ideal mode of Soldier transportation in Baghdad is the M1114 up-armored Humvee. Light, quick and versatile, the M1114 can move Soldiers to where they need to go, and with the armor they need.

"This gives the division flexibility to assign them a wide assortment of tasks," Capt. Steven Erickson, a division supply department planner, said. "Had they shown up and not had this equipment, they'd be confined to the light infantry,



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, conduct pre-combat checks on their brand new M1114 Humvees at Camp Striker near the Baghdad International Airport Dec. 9.

foot patrol kind of mission. This allows them to be mounted and motorized. [They can] get from point A to point B faster, cover more ground, and just be more versatile in their mission."

Finding enough M1114s to supply two battalions, and getting them to Baghdad in time for the airborne Soldiers to begin operations, fell to the First Team's supply staff.

"We put in a request through Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) and they authorized

us the Humvees," Erickson, said. "It was a last minute thing. It was a big consolidated effort to get them up here to the Baghdad area."

The effort included locating enough Humvees to meet the equipment requirements for two battalions, and getting them transported to Baghdad. Currently, all up-armored Humvees are authorized to remain in theater, so when one unit leaves its M1114s are signed over to a newly arriving unit. The First Team found some new M1114s complete with crew-served weapons systems and radios in Kuwait.

"We had them flown in from Kuwait to get them here quick. All in all, within probably a 72-hour period from start to finish we got them out to the 82nd so they can get down to their new units and conduct their combat mission," Erickson said.

During this 72-hour period, First Team Soldiers from the division's supply shop were on hand to sign for and collect the Humvees at Baghdad International Airport as they were flown in, two at a time, on Air Force C-130 cargo planes.

"For six nights we've been pushing and pulling trucks from the [airport], all hours of the night. We've been basically on 24-hour [operations]," Sgt. 1st Class Suree Valenzuela, the supply sergeant for the division's headquarters company, said. "I know that this mission from the 82nd is a very high profile. It's a very important mission for the 82nd. We did everything that we can do to receive all their weapons, radios and trucks to push them out as fast we can so they can take on their mission."

And the 82nd Soldiers are ready to take on their mission, according to Rivera.

"It's a great honor. I think that says it all," Rivera said. "It's a great honor and a privilege for us to be here for this time to help our country."

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

Can you show me that one?
mumkin tureenee zaalik?

Monday
High: 52
Low: 32



Tuesday
High: 52
Low: 28



Wednesday
High: 55
Low: 30



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

Commanding General: Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli

Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. James Hutton

122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Cmdr.: Maj. John Fuhrman

Public Affairs Supervisor: Master Sgt. Dave Larsen

1st Sgt. 122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment: 1st Sgt. William Kuhns

Editor: Spc. Marie Whitney

Staff Writers: Staff Sgt. Susan German, Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns, Sgt. Dan Purcell, Sgt. Christina Rockhill, Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, Cpl. Bill

Putnam, Spc. Jan Critchfield, Spc. Andy Miller, Spc. Erik LeDrew, Spc. Al Barrus, Spc. Erin Robicheaux Pfc. Brian Schroeder, Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin.

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News Notes

Not The Best Place to Build a Home

ROCKINGHAM, Vt. (AP) -- A one-story modular home skidded along the middle of Interstate 91, blocking traffic and leaving a trail of plywood splinters and styrofoam scraps in its dust. The home, on its way north to a foundation in Lempster, N.H., was strapped to a Kenworth flatbed before dislodging. The driver told officers he was traveling 55 miles per hour when he felt a "wobbly herky-jerky pull" right before passing the exit ramp. Once the home became detached, its momentum sent it spinning approximately 500 feet forward on the highway, scraping violently against a west side guard rail as it crossed an overpass.

Kids Will Eat Just About Anything

TACOMA, Wash. (AP) -- A teaching assistant gave some preschoolers dog food to eat during a play-acting exercise at Northeast Tacoma Elementary School. When a few of the students pretended to be puppies, getting down on their hands and knees and barking, the assistant attempted to encourage their playacting. She fetched a packet of dry dog food from another room and placed bits on paper plates on the floor. The dog food came from a display intended to teach the preschoolers what not to eat. The teaching assistant has been placed on paid leave pending an investigation.

Foundation Surprises Teachers with Funds

KILLEEN, Texas (*Killeen Daily Herald*) -- Killeen school district officials and education foundation members spread a generous amount of money and excitement around Killeen-area schools Friday.

The Killeen ISD Education Foundation Prize Patrol made its biannual trip to local schools Friday, handing out \$35,000 in grants. The grants are funded by community donors.

The patrol, with balloons and silly string at the ready, made festive check presentations to 14



Killeen Daily Herald

Nolan Middle School science teacher Suzanne Shamburger celebrates with her students after she and three other science teachers were awarded a grant from the KISD foundation.

teachers at 12 different schools. Some of the grants will go toward professional enrichment opportunities for teachers and the rest will go toward creative classroom projects that enhance students' learning.

The Prize Patrol made quite an impression on the classes it burst into Friday, and other students as well.

"Wow, is that the president?" asked one Maxdale student as the prize patrol marched down the hall. A group of Belaire students stopped to peer into a classroom at the patrol, asking, "Whose birthday is it?"

Education Foundation member Arthur Trujillo said seeing the excited faces of the recipient teachers and their students made the hectic patrol schedule worth it. Foundation member Connie Kuehl said she was enjoying the spectacle also.

For Maxdale Elementary School teacher Juanita Spencer, there was no crying, but lots of cheering.

The class went wild as Spencer was awarded a \$3,000 grant. Spencer and fellow teacher Dollie Frikken wrote a grant called Math Tubs for TAKS. They'll use the grant money to buy math manipulatives for their classes, so students have a hands-on avenue to strengthen their math skills.

"When I got here, I didn't see a lot of hands-on materials, and we need them," Spencer said.

UMHB Graduate, 71, has Passion for Teaching

BELTON, Texas (*Temple Daily Telegram*) -- "Teaching is a high and holy calling," intoned Dr. David Sloan.

The two-dozen education students seated in front of Dr. Sloan are waiting to receive their graduation pins from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. They've run their own classrooms. They've planned their own lessons. Now they just have to graduate.

If you scan the tops of their young heads, one stands out. It holds the short, gray, curly hair of 71-year-old Mary Whitaker. The lifelong teacher who raised and helped educate her seven children, is about to get her degree.

"It's a dream," she says of her diploma, "and a dream that's coming true."

Many years ago, Mary Whitaker put her dream on hold, but did so without remorse. "I had a family to raise," she said.

Ask her any question, and

you are just as likely to receive an equally straightforward reply. In the classroom, Mrs. Whitaker sticks to the basics, as well. "She did a lot of phonics lessons from the old school," said Laurie Cook, under whom Mrs. Whitaker interned at Meridith-Dunbar Elementary for a semester. "The children just really took to it and took to her."

Mrs. Whitaker, who lives in Chilton, near Waco, first interned in Ms. Cook's third-grade class in the fall of 2003, before doing her student teaching in Cameron. In both cases, she liked what she saw. "The thing I liked about both of them was the teamwork," she said. "They all worked together for the children to learn. That's a necessary ingredient."

Mrs. Whitaker said she would begin shopping her degree, which is in kindergarten through fourth-grade education, around Central



Temple Daily Telegram

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Education Professor Dr. Shirley Dahl pins 71-year-old Mary Whitaker at a ceremony Friday evening.

Texas - once she passes her certification exam, of course. And once she has her own classroom, she won't be looking to change the world. She knows better than that.

"I don't want to sound flippant or anything, but somebody has to teach these children to survive in this world, and maybe I can help do that," she said.

Garnett Kicks Kings from Throne

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) -- Kevin Garnett made his first big statement in a bid for a second consecutive NBA Most Valuable Player award.

Garnett scored a season-high 35 points with 18 rebounds and nine assists, and

the Minnesota Timberwolves rallied to beat the Sacramento Kings 113-105 Friday night.

Playing before their largest crowd of the season, the Wolves trailed for most of the first three quarters before using a 18-3 burst in the fourth to

turn a four-point deficit into a 109-98 lead with 2:57 remaining.

Garnett scored 10 points and had five assists in a fourth quarter in which he was teamed for most of the period with four reserves - Fred Hoiberg, Eddie Griffin, Troy Hudson and Trenton Hassell. That quartet combined for 22 points and ignited the crowd of 19,101 with their energy.

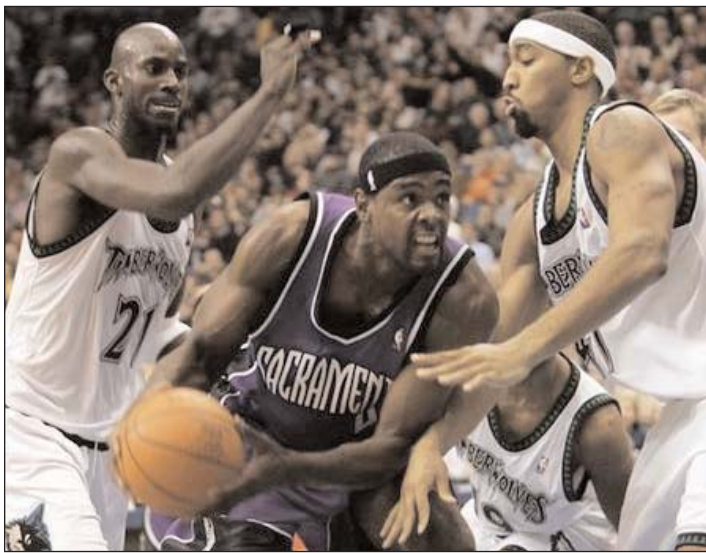
Garnett compared his role on the team to that of an MVP in a different sport.

"The luxury of this team is that I'm like Peyton Manning," Garnett said. "My job is to get everybody touches. Granted, I make the game easier for a lot of people."

Said Griffin, "He's the toughest player in the league to guard. He can score when he wants, and if you try to double-team him, he'll find the open man."

Garnett hit four free throws to tie the score 95-95, then zipped a cross-court pass to Hoiberg for a 3 and a 98-97 advantage, the Wolves' first lead since 6-5.

"He amazes me every night," Hoiberg said. "It's always something different."



AP

Sacramento Kings forward Chris Webber, center, splits the defense of Minnesota Timberwolves forwards Kevin Garnett (21) and Eddie Griffin, right, as he drives to the basket during the fourth quarter in Minneapolis, Friday. Despite Webber's team-high 25 points, the Timberwolves beat the Kings 113-105.

Leinart Is Sixth Heisman Winner From USC

(New York Times) -- Oklahoma quarterback Jason White sidled up to Southern California quarterback Matt Leinart yesterday and told him that it might be a good idea to prepare his Heisman Trophy acceptance speech. Leinart scoffed. He thought he had no chance.

White won the Heisman last year, and the five finalists included one of Leinart's teammates, the electrifying running back Reggie Bush. But when the nervous night was over and the 70th Heisman Trophy had been awarded, Leinart was lugging the trophy through the corridors of the New York Hilton, a big winner yet again.

"I feel like I'm living in a dream," Leinart said at a news conference, "and it's never

going to end."

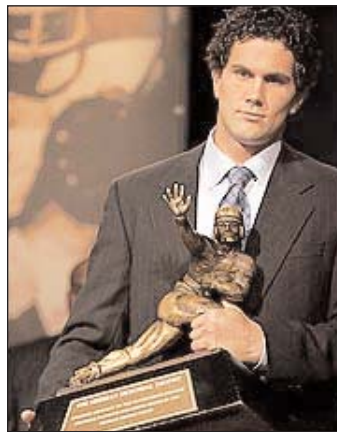
A left-hander from Santa Ana, Calif., Leinart will play for the national championship in three weeks. He won by a comfortable margin over Oklahoma running back Adrian Peterson, who achieved a first by finishing as the runner-up.

Peterson, from Palestine, Tex., was the first freshman to finish second.

One of the first-place votes Peterson received was cast by White, who finished third in the balloting this year and who has lifetime voting privileges because of his Heisman victory last year.

White said he voted for Leinart second. But White did not seem to be too disappointed.

"I think there might be a



AP

Matt Leinart received 267 of 923 first-place votes and had 1,325 points over all.

guy coming up who might join him," he said, referring to Peterson.

In Brief

The 'Godfather of Soul' Has Cancer

(AP) -- James Brown, the



"Godfather of Soul" and a legend in rap, rock and funk, has announced that

he has prostate cancer. In a statement Friday, Brown, 71, said will undergo surgery for the ailment Dec. 15. "I have overcome a lot of things in my life. I will overcome this as well," Brown said. Dubbed the hardest working man in show business, he just finished a two-week Canadian tour on Thursday night. He is expected to spend three weeks recovering from the procedure.

Rapper Launches Haitian Aid Effort

NEW YORK (AP) -- Wyclef Jean has launched a nonpolitical humanitarian effort to help rebuild his native Haiti - and he's not "calling bluff." Yele Haiti seeks to use music and community development as an outreach to the Caribbean country's youth. The organization plans to help rebuild schools in slum areas and hold a free concert in Haiti in the spring. Among those on the arrivals line were Susan Sarandon, a member of a task force that is assisting the former Fugees rapper, and her partner, Tim Robbins. "The objective of Yele Haiti is to restore pride and a reason to hope, and for the whole country to regain the deep spirit and strength that is part of our heritage," Jean says on the Yele Haiti Web site.